

# BCLA Multicultural Services Committee Meeting Minutes

**Date:** May 17, 2021 10:00AM

**Location:** Zoom

**Present:** Marianne (VPL), Wendy (RPL), Rei (Surrey Libraries), Eva (BPL), Sasha (iSchool), Allan (UBC), Aditi (UVic), Jorge (BPL), Karen (Squamish Nation), Leila (WVML), Emily S., Ravi (SL), Nadine (SL), Andrea, Anita (Fraser Health), Jiamei, Emily G. (BPL), Noreen (VPL), Jessica (BPL)

*Note taker: Jessica*

## AGENDA

1. Introduction – Jessica
2. Anti-Racism/EDI Roundtable Sharing – Jorge/All
  - What anti-racism/EDI efforts are you doing in libraries or is your organization doing?
  - What has worked or didn't work?
  - What resource or idea do you want to share?
  - What are you curious about?
3. Questions – Jorge/All
4. Next Steps and Next Meeting – Jessica/All

## Introduction

The committee has been meeting since August 2001. The first intentions were to improve access to multilingual materials in BC libraries. Has evolved into more than just books/collections, the committee has been dedicated to advancing library services to multicultural communities in BC for 20 years now. This has included collections development, resource sharing, conference presentations, research surveys, and the development and delivery of the [intercultural communication workshop](#).

## Anti-racism/EDI Roundtable

Aditi (UVic) shared about the work UVic is doing focused on indigenous and TRC initiatives. There is a new equity plan being developed by 2022. There are three advisory groups focused on decolonizing space, decolonizing collections, and elders and knowledge keepers. They are looking to operationalize EDI through all their work and there is an EDI committee in the faculty, and a BIPOC librarian caucus. Additional work done: Hosted “indigenous approaches to holistic wellness” conversations and a ‘Foundations of Decolonization’ lunchtime series (led by Ry Moran), started the Decolonizing reading groups at the library; librarians are working on developing an important decolonizing series with teacher librarians; ongoing discussions with Victoria Native Friendship Centre library.

Resource to share: [Anti-racism LibGuide](#), [Indigenous Approaches to Wellness LibGuide](#)

Leila (WVML) talked about internal discussions within staff, plans for a social inclusion audit, and anti-racism forums held with community partners. If anyone has worked with consultants or EDI audits, connect with Leila.

Wendy (RPL) shared how there's been EDI training (guest speakers with webinar style learning) to engage and inspire staff. Staff also participate in group style conversations. RPL continues to offer timely programming such as programs around Asian Heritage Month (e.g, Unwanted Soldier film screening).

Rei (SL) has recently taken on the portfolio: community outreach for newcomers, at Surrey. There's currently a lot of movement and momentum for inclusion work.

Ravi (SL) mentioned the EDI consultants that Surrey Libraries is working with and that there will be multi-year initiatives (including reviewing all policies and procedures, conducting an internal staff experience audit). Looking at anti-racism with an approach that is holistic, sustainable, and has accountability and to shift it to an effort from a team (vs just individual staff). Reminded us that constant advocacy is needed, and solidarity.

Nadine (SL) shared about the work done in programming to highlight diverse voices. They want to get more ideas and to hear what other libraries are doing.

Eva (BPL) shared about BPL's Indigenous Initiatives Working Group, and the current anti-racism audit that's been gathering conversations and information and we're now awaiting results.

Emily G (BPL, Langara, Vivo) highlighted the Anti-racism Working Group at BPL (that they co-lead). The group is looking at and how they impact racialized staff member, what needs to shift to better support racialized staff member before looking outward. They're also looking at how to keep having conversations internally, a shared definition about anti-racism and how do we apply it to our work. Note that the working groups at BPL are made up of staff across classifications and across locations who are racialized and non-racialized. There is one exception: there are no supervisors or members of management.

Jorge (BPL) added that they're in the process of reviewing and redesigning policies. At BPL, they're also writing it into staff positions that EDI is part of their work.

Allan (UBC) talked about looking at programming at UBC and how to deal with unrepresented and marginalized groups on campus – and within a traditional institution. How can we do a better job with programs (that's more than checking off a box)? UBC has an Inclusion Action Plan that's system-wide and will impact teaching, learning, human resources. A reminder that systemic change takes time and a cultural shift. In June there will be an Anti-Asian Forum open to everyone; Allan will share a link to the committee.

Karen (Squamish Nation, Archives) is creating and publishing materials for the archives at Squamish Nation. There's been EDI training for the nation as a whole but the content is not tailored or customized. Karen is interested in partnerships with public libraries and language revitalization, please reach out if anyone shares this interest.

Sasha (SLAIS) talked about IDEAS at UBC, a group for BIPOC students. They've been organizing a speaker's series with BIPOC professionals where they can share what it is like to be a racialized professional in this field. There are plans for creating a mentorship program.

Marianne (VPL) informed us that VPL is hiring someone with a background in indigenous studies to work with the policy and planning department to decolonize their spaces and forge a better relationship with the indigenous community. They also shared about City of Vancouver's survey to learn more about the diversity within city departments.

Noreen (VPL) is new to the committee and looking forward to learning from everyone.

Andrea Davidson talked to us about BCIT Indigenous Initiatives and Partnership Team and indigenous international student exchanges, and indigenous competency modules. They shared that the [Indigenous 101 Modules](#) are now open to anyone. They noted that a lack of access to technology and being zoomed out has made it hard to engage with students. They're curious to hear how the different system's audits go and would like to review what the best practices are. They'll be sharing more about how the indigenous international student mobility program goes.

Emily S. has been following EDI and metadata work. They've noticed it's well promoted and the conversation is lively in the states but quieter in Canada. They recently wrote an article summarizing the discussion on this topic at an ALA technical services session.

Anita (Fraser Health) works with a patient and public collection in Abbotsford that's joint with BC Cancer. They're looking for resources and material in other languages to better serve the community.

Additional Resources shared during the meeting:

- Kwantlen Indigenous Libguide - <https://libguides.kpu.ca/indigenous>
- Capilano Indigenous Libguide - <https://libguides.capilanou.ca/indigenous-resources>
- Anti-Asian Hate Bystander Intervention Training offered by Hollaback! And the Asian Americans Advancing Justice <https://www.ihollaback.org/bystanderintervention/>
- [Michif Language Conversation Workshop](#) from Métis Nation. Organizers are looking for opportunities to work with public and academic libraries — Amy Cross is the contact and her info is here: 250-581-2111 or email [rmmaculture@gmail.com](mailto:rmmaculture@gmail.com)

## Questions

Discussion:

- How to respond to bureaucracy as a challenge and what would be ideal for addressing issues
- Appreciate the space for sharing stories with each other
- More about the IDEAS succession plan to support racialized students at iSchool
- Our local organization (BCLA) and anti-racism efforts
- About systemic discrimination

## Next Steps & Next Meetings:

*Action: Committee chairs to gather next steps from committee members (via email communication)*

**Next Meeting Date: July 13<sup>th</sup> 2-3:30PM**

Meeting was adjourned at 11:27 AM.